



December 2002

Volume 13, Issue 12

Next Meeting: The Future of the Internet

John Patrick on riding the next wave of Web development.



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President's File



PRESIDENTIAL
RAMBLINGS
ISSUE 0.7

DECEMBER is when we hold our annual meeting. This is our best attended meeting, but this fact is undoubtedly due to John Patrick rather any sense of excitement over the club elections. DACS is a corporation and just like all of the corporations in the news lately, the owners (members) of the corporation elect a board of directors as their representatives. The board then selects officers to handle the day to day operation of the corporation (club). Given all the recent news about corporate governance, it should come as no surprise that DACS has a skeleton in it's the closet.

When I was elected to the board last year, I found that the club bylaws limited directors to serving two terms. At that point, I was the only "legal" director. Now I want to immediately make clear that everyone on the board is an honest, hard working person doing what he or she believes to be the best interest of the club. Plus they had all totally forgotten about the term limits in the bylaws. Presently we elect directors to a term of two years and stagger the terms of directors to ensure continuity on board.

So, in addition to electing a slate of directors, we have the opportunity to bring the bylaws into conformance with

what has been the practice of the club since before it was incorporated. Personally I have mixed emotions about this change. I thought term limits were a good idea for Congress, and I think those same benefits could apply to other organizations as well. However the decision is up to you, the members. Please read the proposed amendment and vote what you think is best for the club.

Homeland Security Act

There is a little known provision in the Homeland Security Act that creates what might be the biggest software project since "Star Wars" of the Regan era – the Total Information Awareness Program. This project will allow the federal government to collect records on every thing you do: every charge card transaction, every book you buy or check out from the library, every time you use your EasyPass, every travel ticket you purchase. Given all this information, the feds could trace all of your activities every day of the week. Could this information help catch terrorists? Possibly. Could this information be abused? Definitely! A version of this bill has already passed the House. Please call, write or email both of our senators and tell Mr. Lieberman and Mr. Dodd how you feel about the federal government watching everything you do. Remember, they will not be watching just the terrorists or even just criminals or suspected criminals, they will be watching YOU. It may make you feel better to know that this entire program will be run from within the Pentagon.

JIM SCHEEF
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Flash

DACS has been informed that www.dacs.org was named first runner-up in the Best Web Site Contest, sponsored by the Association of PC User Groups (APCUG). Winners were announced at the annual User Group Summit at COMDEX in Las Vegas November 16-20.

Membership Information

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HelpLine

Volunteers have offered to field member questions by phone. Please limit calls to the hours indicated below. Days means 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; evening means 6 to 9:30 p.m. Please be considerate of the volunteer you are calling. HelpLine is a free service. If you are asked to pay for help or are solicited for sales, please contact the dacs.doc editor; the person requesting payment will be deleted from the listing. Can we add your name to the volunteer listing?

d = day **e** = evening

Program	Name	Phone #	
Alpha Four	Dick Gingras	(203) 426-0484	(e)
AOL	Marc Cohen	(203) 775-1102	(d e)
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Windows	Nick Strother	(203) 743-5667	(e)

Directors' Notes

A MEETING OF THE DACS Board of Directors was held at the Resource Center on Monday, November 11, 2002, at 7:00 p.m. Present were Messrs Bovaird, Buoy, Keane, Ostergren, Pearson, Preston, Scheef and Setaro and Mrs Gaberel. Jim Scheef, President, presided and Larry Buoy, Secretary, kept the record of the meeting. Minutes of the last meeting, held October 7, 2002, were approved with two corrections.

Treasurer Charlie Bovaird reported combined bank and postal accounts of \$17,192.97, plus postage on hand of \$129.76, a total of \$17,321.97, less prepaid dues of \$7,360.00, for a net of \$9,961.97. He also reported current membership of 456.

During a discussion of prospective programs for General Meetings, it was stated that the meeting for January, 2003, would be a presentation by Frank Powers on transferring vinyl and tape media material to CDs. Other possible presentations by DACS "Old Timers," home networking (with probable restrictions or prohibition by the Hospital using the "WiFi" technique,) DSL Internet access availability by a representative of mags.net and/or wideband access by a DACS member and on digital photography (as opposed to digital manipulation.)

After advice by Jim Scheef that an additional page of membership benefits would be added to the DACS Web Site, further discussion ensued on the subject of making the database of DACS membership email addresses available to DACS members, with no acceptable method of doing so being suggested.

Next discussed were the donations of furniture (computer stations, desks, bookcases, chairs, etc.), potential uses thereof and disposal of the less desirable furniture it may replace, as well as additional computers installed at the RC.

After a brief discussion, the Secretary was instructed to send a letter to Matt Greger, expressing the regret of the Board at his resignation as a Director.

Following a brief analysis of the effectiveness of DACS' presence at the Computer Fair held at the O'Neill Center on October 13, the possible availability of a mentor or security observer for the RC was discussed and will be investigated.

On request, Allan Ostergren offered the names of Charlie Bovaird, Marlène

Directors Notes continued on page 5

NOTICE

To the Membership of Danbury Area Computer Society (DACS):

DACS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization incorporated in the State of Connecticut with Bylaws last revised on October 31, 1993. In a recent examination of these Bylaws, we noted several possible conflicts with established practices in electing members of the board and setting their terms of office. While this does not affect the legality of our existence or jeopardize our standing as a 501(c)(3), it just means that we are not operating according to the rules set down and agreed upon by the membership at large when the organization was founded or when the membership at large approved modifications to the Bylaws.

At a recent board meeting, a committee was established to propose revisions to the Bylaws. The affected paragraphs are listed below. The clauses or phrases to be deleted are highlighted in bold and underlined. Specifically, these remove restrictions on serving consecutive terms of office and on board members serving as officers. There is also one replacement change—officers' terms have been changed to start April 1st rather than January 1st—to allow the board more time to identify and recruit officer candidates. It is shown in italics.

The full Bylaws of the organization will be posted on the DACS website. These modifications will be presented for approval to the membership at large at the annual meeting, to be held concurrently with the December General Meeting. After the vote upon the revisions to the Bylaws, the regularly scheduled elections of the Board of Directors will be held.

Board of Directors

16. Authority, number, term and qualification. The business, property and affairs of the Corporation shall be managed by or under the direction of the Board of Directors. The Board may exercise all such authority and powers of the Corporation and do all such lawful acts and things as are not by statute or the Certificate of Incorporation or by these Bylaws directed or required to be exercised or done by members. The Corporation shall have not less than three directorships. The number of directorships may be changed by resolution of the members or of the Board or, in the absence thereof, shall be the number of directors elected at the last annual meeting of members. Each director shall hold office for the term for which he or she is elected **except that no director shall serve more than two consecutive terms** and until his successor shall have been duly elected and shall have qualified; provided, however, that a director shall cease to be in office upon: (i) death; (ii) his or her resignation; (iii) his or her removal from office in accordance with these Bylaws, or any other lawful removal from office; or (iv) an order of a court that, by reason of incompetency or any other lawful cause, he or she is no longer a director in office. Directors need not be residents of the State of Connecticut.

Recommended Modification: Delete ***except that no director shall serve more than two consecutive terms***

Reason for change - to permit a director to serve more than two consecutive terms. The director must still be elected by the membership at large for each additional term.

Officers

26. Number, qualification, term and election.

(A) There shall be a Chairperson of the Board (who shall be a member of the Board) who shall serve for a term of one year. The Chairperson shall be elected by the Board of Directors at its December meeting and shall preside at meetings of the Board.

(B) The officers of the Corporation shall be a President and a Secretary. There may also be a Chairman of the Board (who must be a member of the Board), a Vice President, a Treasurer, an Assistant Treasurer and such other officers as shall be appointed in accordance with these Bylaws. Any two or more offices may be held by the same person, except the offices of President and Secretary. The officers of the Corporation **who shall not be directors** shall each be elected by the Board of Directors for a term of one year commencing on **January 1 April 1**. Each officer shall hold office for the term for which he or she is elected except **that no officer shall serve more than two consecutive terms and**, in the case of the President or Secretary, until his or her successor shall have been duly elected and shall have qualified, provided, however, that an officer shall cease to be in office upon: (i) death; (ii) his or her resignation; (iii) his or her removal from office in accordance with these Bylaws, or any other lawful removal from office; or (iv) an order of a court that, by reason of incompetency or any other lawful cause, he or she is no longer an officer in office.

Recommended Modification: Delete ***who shall not be directors***

Reason for change - implies that an officer may not be a director.

Replace ***January 1*** with ***April 1***

Reason for change - to give the board more time to identify and recruit candidates for officer positions.

Delete ***that no officer shall serve more than two consecutive terms and***,

Reason for change - to permit an officer to serve more than two terms.

Meeting Review

Miscellaneous Microsoft

By Marlène Gaberel

Gaberel, Bill Keane, Don Neary and Don Pearson as the directors who would be candidates for re-election at the December Annual Meeting of the Membership. Don Pearson thereupon announced that he would soon be moving from the area and, consequently, felt that his election for another term as a director would be unrealistic and declined to stand for election. Possible candidates to replace Don were explored.

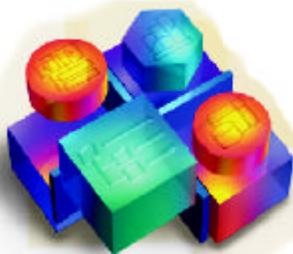
Further exploration of the subject of better utilization of space intended for "Business Card" ads in the newsletter led to the determination that such space be available for such ads free of charge to any current member of DACS, in the order of receipt of copy and subject to available space, to priority for paid advertisements and to restrictions of the United States Postal Service on advertising within pieces mailed under a non-profit bulk mailing permit.

It was suggested by Jim Scheef that the email list be moved to the Sendmail category of the server of the Linux machine. It was recognized that doing so is not a trivial task and that volunteers should be recruited to assist.

Charlie Bovaird then advised the meeting that under current and expected increases in the fees charged by credit card issuers, the automatic renewal of memberships may soon be a losing proposition. Bruce Preston suggested that the "PayPal" program be investigated as an alternative clearing house for credit card dues payment.

Allan Ostergren mentioned the lack of any action to date on notification to APCUG that the officers of DACS had changed. He also informed the meeting that the Danbury Chamber of Commerce would be sponsoring its annual Business Showcase on Thursday, November 14, in which DACS may or may not wish to participate. Following discussion, it was the consensus that DACS not participate.

LARRY BUOY



AT THE NOVEMBER 2002 meeting, Alan Chitlik of Microsoft presented a stocking stuffer's dream of his company's hardware and software.

I understand that Chitlik usually writes the material for for Microsoft presentations to DACS general meetings in the past. Microsoft speakers have generally been very much on target, spending just the right amount of time on each of their topics, and keeping their impeccable and fluent presentations to the allotted time. Alan, on the other hand, did not seem to be as prepared as previous speakers. He did not seem to be familiar with the hardware and software, or those may have been too new for him to have time to be fully prepared.

The first item on Chitlik's agenda was Microsoft's latest digital imaging program, called Digital Image Pro. It is an upgrade of previous Microsoft programs.

The demo was on the latest Tablet PC. Alan explained that the newest Digital Imaging Pro is more like Photoshop, and may require a little more expertise in photo software than the previous edition. One feature that Alan demonstrated is how facial features on your pictures can be enhanced. He gave some examples of wrinkle eradication and removing that frown that was not meant to be when the photo was taken. He emphasized that the photographer will endear him/herself to his/her models, using those features. Photo Digital Imaging is a higher-end program, and offers additional tools. It is more professional-targeted than previous editions. Using the program, the background of pictures can be lightened all at once.

The software also adjusts lightening automatically. Another feature demonstrated was how the mini-lab works, where two photos or more can be fixed all at the same time. For example, all photos taken when it was too dark can all be brightened at once. Albums and postcards can also be designed. Alan was hesitant in demonstrating some of the software features. He did not seem solidly familiar with it.

The recent press has extensively described the new PC tablets that use Microsoft's operating system. DACS members were able to see it first hand.

The kids that were with me all wanted one Tablet for Christmas because of its mobility and its easiness to use in class for note taking. The draw back, however, is that the tablets have small RAM, which excludes most games. The demo of the Tablet showed members the "to do" list, and the possibility of writing music. The two musicians in my group of kids had a good laugh at Alan's musical writing. An agenda for a meeting can be prepared. Text can be easily moved around, which is not possible with a piece of paper. Follow-ups can be done. Also the ease of transcribing information from a meeting was demonstrated. Maybe I should have one to take notes during general meetings. The tablet even has sticky notes. According to Chitlik, the Tablet is fine for general business applications, but would not be sufficient at this time for hard core gamers.

The pocket PC was also demonstrated. Alan did not get his hardware to work right away. So I wonder if this is too new a gadget, when a specialist gets stuck with it! The pocket PC has a supplementary keyboard. It also has a wireless capability.

The meeting was fast getting to the end and Alan did not get a chance to show all the programs he intended to demonstrate. Unfortunately, the kids with me were very disappointed not to be able to see the preview of the games that Microsoft will release next year, which would have been worth seeing. The games preview was the reason they came along to the general meeting. Games may not interest all mainstream DACS members, but we have to interest as many potential new members as possible.

The question is which hardware, the Tablet PC or the pocket PC, will replace or complement our desktop computers. We are more and more a mobile society, especially with cell phones becoming more common. Now that we are taking our phones everywhere we go, will we do the same with our computers?

Marlène Gaberel is a DACS board member and VP for Public Relations. You can e-mail her at: marlene_gaberel@yahoo.com.

Digital Audio

Building a Digital Library - Part Two Recording Analog Tapes and Vinyl Records

by Frank Powers

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECORD your favorite old LP's and analog tapes to your computer for use in Digital Music Library? Once recorded and added to hard drives music library you can also make audio CDs for playback in your car stereo as well as data CD's to back up and archive your original analog recordings. This involves recording the LP or tape to the computer's hard drive using a stand alone software wave editing program such as Voyetra's AudioSurgeon™, Sonic Foundry's SoundForge™ Studio 6.0, or Cool Edit 2000 and your soundcard's line input. Several Media Player software packages also offer the ability to record analog sources as part of their built-in programs. MusicMatch JukeBox and Cakewalk Pyro are two packages that offer this capability. If you want to try your hand at Noise Reduction, Cool Edit and SoundForge professional packages offer the greatest assortment of tools, albeit at a higher cost.

Before you dive right into this, be aware it takes time and effort. For that reason I suggest you confine yourself to:

- Personal recordings on tape - old bands, your kids first laugh, etc.
- Tape recordings of special events from the radio/TV - that 1966 live concert you taped on your old Dokorder Reel to Reel etc.
- Vinyl Records no longer in print - You looked but there is just no CD available.

I'd work through your collection in that order as well, as tape is the most fragile of all the mediums.

The free version of AudioSurgeon can be found by browsing to:

<http://www.voyetra.com> -> Support -> FTP File download -> AudioSurgeon 5, or by going directly to <ftp://ftp.voyetra.com/pub/voy/asurgeon/asurgeon.exe>

To record an analog tape (or other analog source) to your hard drive you'll need:

- Analog source material and a device capable of playing the material. Use the best equipment you have for playback. For example, if you can choose between a Sony Walkman portable player and a

Sony component cassette deck, use the component cassette deck.

- A cable to connect the cassette deck to the computer soundcard. The two most often used are 1/8" stereo phone plug to 1/8" stereo phone plug and 1/8" stereo phone plug to dual RCA plugs. Examples from the Radio Shack catalog (Figure 1):



- A software audio recording program such as AudioSurgeon.
- Sufficient hard disk space to record the selection. A ballpark calculation is multiply each minute of stereo CD quality by 10mbs. So a 3 minute song will take 30 mbs and a 30 minute tape will use 300mbs of hard disk space. Make sure that you have at least double the required space available on your hard drive so that you have sufficient room to perform edits.

What quality should I expect?

The first goal of transcribing an analog medium to digital format is to preserve the best possible copy of the analog source. If your audio tape has hiss, you will be recording the hiss in the digital file. Likewise, on a vinyl record, you will be recording all the pops and crackles that exist on the original record. While all the programs I suggest below do have tools to remove pops and crackles as well as tape hiss, 60 cycle hum, etc. you should always save a pure unfiltered recording of the original. This becomes your MASTER recording and you should cut this to CD and label the CD as a MASTER. Later, you can bring the pure file back into your computer and try the various tools for removing unwanted noise. If you find, as I do, that removing the noise also removes too much of the original high frequencies (such as cymbals), you still have the original digital recording to return to and you

can try again, or like me, decide to live with the noise. If your goal is to produce a better sounding copy of the original, be prepared for a lot of experimentation with the filters and transforms available.

What preparations should I take before recording the original source material?

Remember the old adage - "Garbage In - Garbage Out". That being said, there are some simple common sense techniques you can use to achieve the highest possible fidelity on your old analog mediums. Below are some of my tips for

1/8" stereo phone plug to dual RCA plug



Figure 1

getting the most out of your analog recordings.

Vinyl Records:

- Get them clean! A diluted solution of soupy water and a soft chamois cloth can be used to gently wash away the years of accumulated dirt and grime from a vinyl records surface. Remember, less is better. Don't rub too hard and don't use too much soap. Allow the record to air dry completely, and DO NOT let it dry in the sun! Another technique is to use the record cleaning solutions and soft brushes still available in audio stores and Radio Shack.

- Clean or replace your phono cartridge stylus! There are soft brushes available, but you can also use a camels hair brush such as the ones women use to apply makeup. Remove the cartridge from the tone-arm and turn it over so that the needle is pointing up. Gently stroke the brush towards the front of the cartridge only. This is very important. NEVER stroke the needle in the direction of its stem. You WILL bend the needle stem if you do!

- Clean your turntable mat with an anti-static solution safe for rubber and / or vinyl.

- Insure that your turntables belts are in good condition and if your turntable has an adjustment for fine tuning the speed, make sure that it is adjusted properly for the speed of the records you wish to record.

- Adjust and balance your tone arm to the recommended weight specified by the cartridge manufacturer. Adjust the anti-skating mechanism on your tone-arm to the manufacturers specs.

- If your records have known skips, you can temporarily overcome the skipping by increasing the tone-arm weight. You can do this by adding weight a 1/2 gram at a time to the counterweight setting of the tone-arm or by placing a penny on top of the cartridge head if your tone arm cannot be adjusted.

Analog Tapes:

- Clean the tape heads with a Cue tip and head cleaning solution available at Radio Shack. Rubbing alcohol can be used in a pinch, but it does leave a slight film on the head.

- Clean the rubber rollers and capstan with a special cleaning solution for rubber surfaces. Alcohol will dry out rubber, so only use alcohol to clean rubber parts in an extreme emergency!

- De-magnetize the tape recorder heads using a specialized tape demagnetization tool. Keep the tool FAR away from any tapes!

- Fast forward and then rewind the tape before beginning the recording. Tapes stored for a long time can stick and this insures that the tape is freely moving inside the tape holder. As a side note - always store tapes vertically. Never store any tape, cassette, reel to reel or VHS on its side.

Special consideration for Reel to Reel Tapes:

- If you have reel to reel tapes you may want to purchase a new "take-up" reel to insure that you don't get the squealing noise produced when the tape rubs against the take-up reel.

- Reel to reel recorders also can have their heads adjusted up/down to insure

that the stereo channels are properly tracked. To do this you need a specialized tape that produces the tones needed for adjustment. Ideally you would use an oscilloscope, but I have used my ears to make this adjustment. Tapes made on different machines may not track properly on the recorder you currently have. You can try to compensate for this by adjusting the heads for the tape. This begins to get very complex, and if the tape is something really special, you may want to consider having it transcribed for you by someone with the proper equipment.

How do I record analog tapes to my computer?

- Connect the Line Out of your Cassette Deck or Tape Monitor outputs of your stereo receiver or integrated amplifier to the stereo Line In on your soundcard using a 1/8th stereo phone plug to dual RCA jack audio cable (Figure 2). These cables are readily available at local audio or Radio Shack stores.

- Place your cassette tape in your tape players compartment and set your stereo's input selector to TAPE (the setting on your stereo may vary and could be labeled TAPE MONITOR or AUXILLARY).

- On the computer, open AudioSurgeon.
- Select the File menu and open a new file. Set the Sound selection to CD Quality

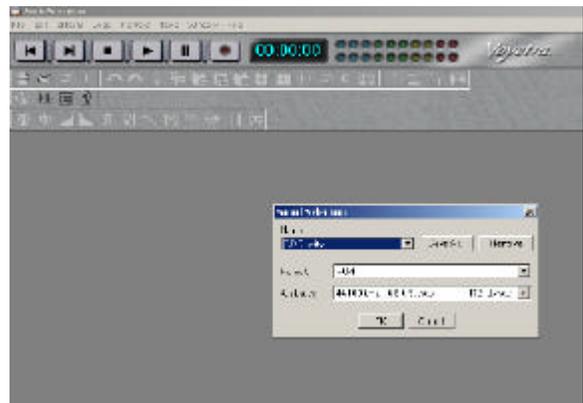


Figure 3

—PCM 44.1kHz—16 bit stereo and press OK (figure 4).

- Press the Red Record button in AudioSurgeon. It will now flash indicating that you are in Record Standby mode.

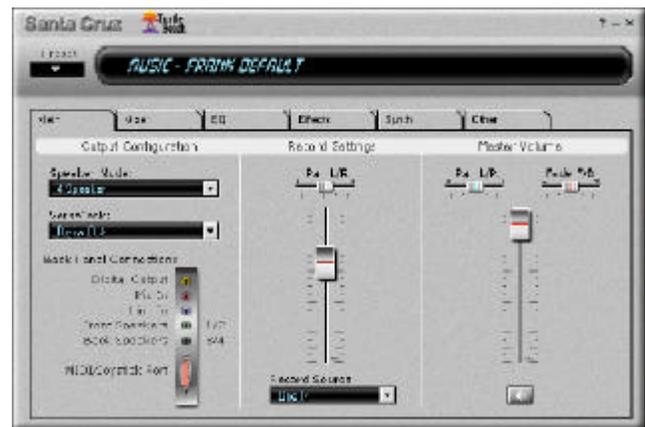


Figure 4

- Open your sound card's mixer controls and select Line In as the recording source. If you are using the Turtle Beach Santa Cruz the mixer application should be set up as indicated in the screen-print (Figure 4).

Windows Mixer

NOTE: to use the Windows mixer click on Start ' Programs ' Accessories ' Entertainment ' Volume Control. When the Windows mixer opens click on Options - Properties ' Recording (figures 5-6).

- Leaving AudioSurgeon in Record Standby, begin playback of the LP or tape and adjust the mixer control until the mixer's (or AudioSurgeon's) LED's periodically activate the first red LED. You should play several minutes of audio from the analog source in order to assure that you have adjusted your level to accommodate both the loudest and softest passages of the material.

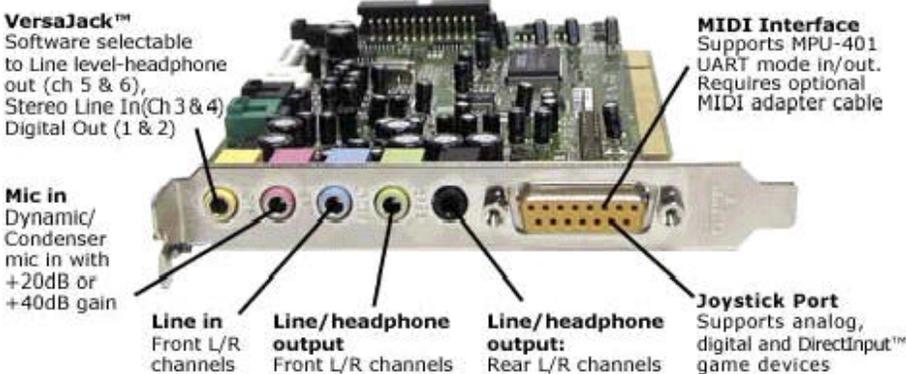


Figure 2



Figure 5

as one long continuous file. Alternately, you can also record one track at a time.

- The full version of AudioSurgeon includes the ability to place markers in the file to indicate the various tracks. If you record the whole side of a cassette tape or LP, you can search for the "silence" between tracks, and place markers to indicate where a new track begins. The full version will also allow you to burn a CD directly from the program and if you have inserted markers, the program will automatically burn the CD with a new track at each marker you have inserted.

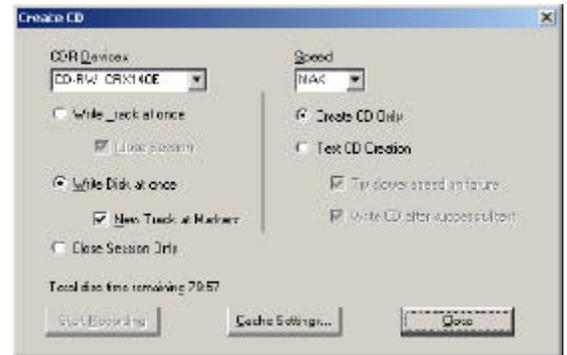


Figure 8

vidual tracks, and perform basic noise reduction. Its use of the windows explore makes navigation easy to learn and it can

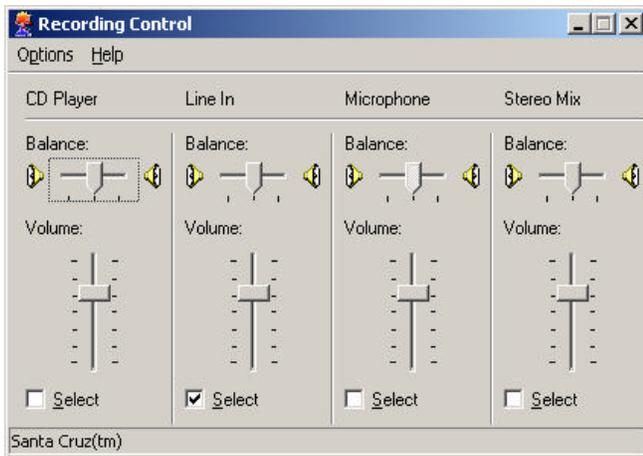


Figure 6

- Once you are satisfied with your recording levels, start the recording in AudioSurgeon by pressing the Red Record button again.

- Now start your source playback. You can edit out the blank space at the beginning of the track after the recording has completed.

- If you have sufficient hard disk space, you can record the whole side of the tape

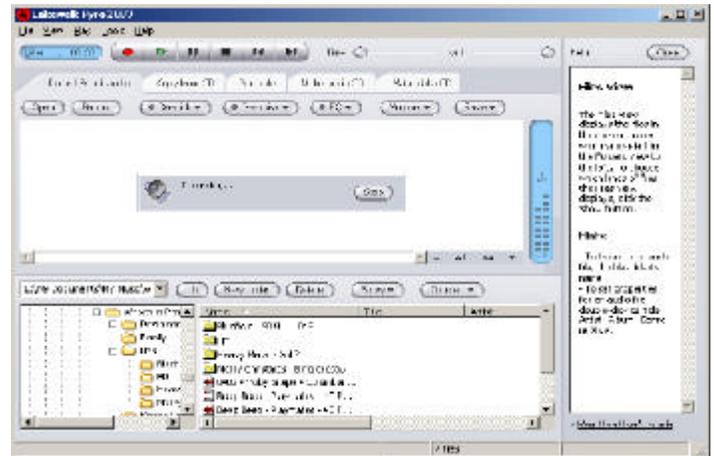


Figure 9

Be sure to select Disk at Once and check the box marked New Track at Markers (Figures 7-8).

Cakewalk Pyro

Cakewalk offers a combination media organizer and audio editor. Its recording features make it convenient to record vinyl or tapes, split long recordings into indi-

ripped CD's and create data and audio CD's. If you don't expect to have a lot of material and like the idea of using Explorer rather than a distinct music library, it is a choice worth considering.

Figure 9 shows what recording analog looks like in this Pyro.

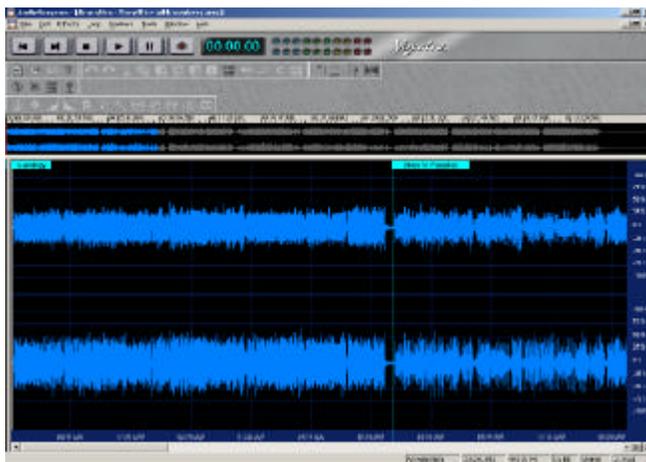


Figure 7

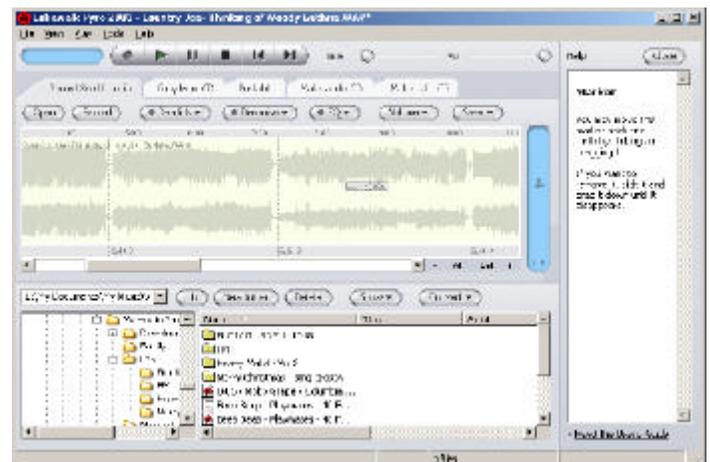


Figure 10



Figure 11

• Note how to find files from different artists I would have to navigate to multiple folders (figure 10-11).

MusicMatch Jukebox

MusicMatch does not have a audio editor or noise reduction transforms. You can record and set levels using your soundcard mixer.

Cool Feature - Delayed Recording works much like a VCR. When used in conjunction with Line In recording you can record, as an example, an interesting radio program scheduled for a time when you will not be near a radio.

Figure 12-13 show what it looks like in MMJB.

Recording a Vinyl Record

The output of a typical vinyl record turntable is extremely low and lacks the R.I.A.A. equalization compensation needed to restore bass frequencies to the vinyl recordings' output. When turntables were in use, a phono preamp was built into the preamplifier section of the re-

ceiver. With the advent of CD technology, many modern receivers lack a phono input. In such cases the soundcard's Line In will not "see" a hot enough signal to make a good recording and you will get a very "thin" sounding recording. A solution for this is to connect your turntable to a standalone phonograph preamplifier, available from many Internet audio access-

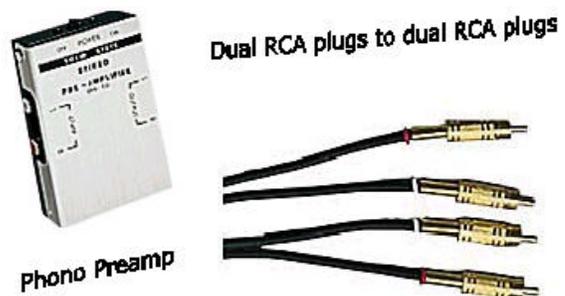


Figure 14

a new 44.1 kHz - 16 bit file and paste the audio you cut into the new file. Name this

vendor (figure 14). Radio Shack stores are good local, although you may have to order it as many stores don't keep these in stock. You can order directly online from www.radioshack.com.

• If you use a phono preamp you will need to connect the IN to your turntable's output jacks and the OUT to your soundcard's Line In or you could connect the phono preamp to the Auxiliary IN of your stereo receiver and then connect the receivers Tape Out to your soundcard's Line In.

• Once you have the preamp connected, follow the steps for recording an analog tape.



Figure 15



Figure 16

file and save it. Now when you go back to the original, the file will end on the next to the last song. Continue the process until all the individual tracks have been cut and saved.

Archiving and adding your recordings to your Digital Library

I am going to assume that you are not going to try and de-hiss or de-pop your recordings, although I will give some tips on doing that in the next section. For now, lets assume that you are satisfied with having recorded the analog source to your hard drive and have cut it into tracks and created an audio CD of the tape or vinyl record.

After I make the audio CD in AudioSurgeon, I immediately place the

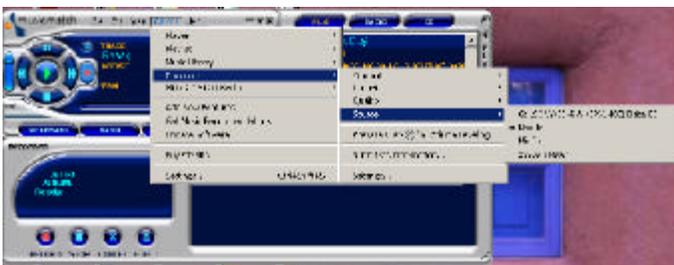


Figure 12



Figure 13

Tip: If you record the whole side of a tape with SoundForge or Cool Edit, you can break it into individual tracks more efficiently by starting at the end of the file and working back until you see the first point of silence. Select / highlight the audio from the end until the first point of silence and use the cut command to remove it from the original. Now open

CD back in the drive and let it open AudioStation and then go out to the GraceNote where typically it will not find any information on the CD you created. AudioStation, Pyro, and / or MusicMatch will list the tracks and time but leave the Artist, Album Title, and track titles blank. I enter the information and then submit it to the online service, so that any time I place that audio CD back in the drive, the online service returns the Artist, Album, and track titles I have entered. When I enter the Album name I also use the catalog number that is found on the vinyl records cover. Figures 15 and 16 provide an example:

In addition, now that I have cataloged the new CD with them, the information is ready to be placed in my ID3 tags when I rip the CD in compressed format to my hard drive. I now print a CD cover listing the CD title, Artist, and track names and place the CD in a CD binder for safe keeping. I have the MP3 tracks on my hard drive to listen to or to compile another audio CD from. If you own a digital camera, you can also take a picture of the front and back cover of the album. With a little photo manipulation you can then add the photo to the ID3 tag of your MP3 files. I resize the photo down to 200 * 200 pixels for this.

Now my digital library also includes a photo of the original cover art as well as the recordings themselves.

So I now have an audio CD, and the tracks on the audio CD have been ripped in MP3 format with all the needed information to my digital library. But I still have the huge wave file on my hard drive. Unless you have unlimited hard drive storage you are going to want to remove this big file from your hard drive so you can repeat the process with another record or tape. Use Roxio Easy CD Creator, Nero, AudioStation or MusicMatch's DATA CD mode and create a data CD of the original wave file. If you did take the extra step of shooting a picture of the album cover, add the original photo to the data CD as well. Print a label and store it right next to the audio CD you created. This data CD can be used later if you want to try your hand at cleaning up the audio, but you'll never have to go through the tedious proves of recording the analog medium again.

Noise Reduction

We've covered a lot of ground in this article, and I have purposefully left

out Noise Reduction as it is a very broad topic. AudioSurgeon and the other programs mentioned all have tools to try and eliminate pops and clicks as well as tape hiss. After you have saved the original file, go ahead and try them out on a copy of the saved file. Just remember never to change the original file, work with a copy so you don't inadvertently save the altered version and lose all your hard work!

NOTE:

Be sure to attend the digital audio demo at January 7th General Meeting!

I'll be showing the techniques covered in these articles at the January 7th DACS General Meeting, so give the techniques here a try and be sure to bring your questions.

FRANK POWERS has extensive digital music experience working for companies like Voyetra Turtle Beach, Inc and Sam Ash Music, as well as composing his own material and running an Internet radio station. Frank is available for digital music consulting, and can be reached by email at: frank@franksamericana.com. You can find out more by visiting his website at <http://www.franksamericana.com>.

He also can be heard on the Internet at Frank's Americana™ Live365 Internet Radio station at <http://www.live365.com/stations/fpowers>.



Do the DACS General Meetings leave you thirsting for more? Find all that plus food for thought at the meeting after the meeting—the DACS PIG SIG.

New Members

8/21 thru 9/20

- 1) Fiona Nicholson
- 2) John E. Shirley
- 3) Frank Briscoe
- 4) Mike Shellman

THIS IS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER

If the membership date on your mailing label reads

EXP 9/2002

or earlier

You need to renew your DACS membership

NOW

FREE CLASSIFIEDS

DACS members may publish noncommercial, computer-related classified ads in *dacs.doc* at no charge. Ads may be placed electronically by fax or by modem, or hard-copy may be submitted at our monthly general meeting. Fax your ads to Charlie Bovaird at 203 792-7881.

Leave hard-copy classifieds with Charlie, Marc, or whoever is tending the members' table at the meeting.

Hardware Review

Be a Maestro at the PC with Microsoft's Multimedia Keyboard

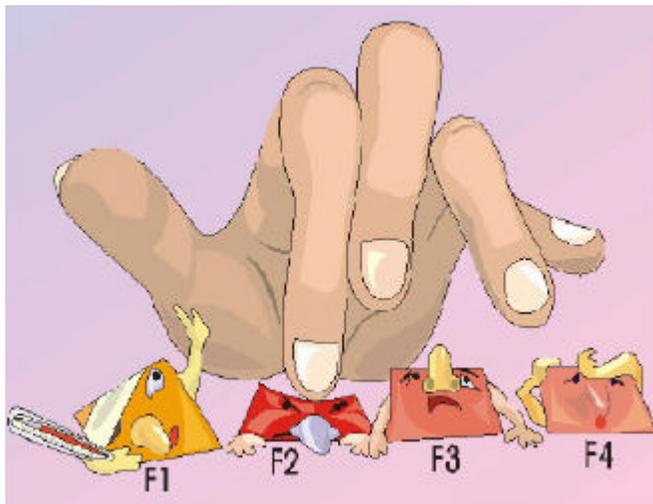
By Brian Lund

I'VE BEEN GOING to meetings for quite a while. I have probably won *something* from our various vendors, on average of, maybe, once every 13-14 months. Some things I've been impressed with, and some not. Microsoft, despite their somewhat deserved reputation, are nonetheless one of the most generous vendors DACS has seen. When they've been in town, I've won a backpack, Microsoft Money (I'll stick with my Quicken, though!), and at our most recent meeting, I was fortunate to have been the recipient of a Microsoft Multimedia Keyboard.

I would like to tell you I had no trouble in the installation of the keyboard, but I cannot. First, you have to install the software before plugging in the keyboard. I tried to install the included Intellitype Pro software, but I kept getting an error. I tried the install several times, to no success. After searching Microsoft's Knowledgebase with the error message, and trying a myriad of other search criteria, after about an hour and a half, I finally found the answer. The installer file on the CD was conflicting with the one in the machine. I had to delete the installer file, in MS-DOS mode, and try the install again. SUCCESS!! I could shut down, and switch keyboards!

When the computer booted, the software setup asked for the type of keyboard, at which time the setup ran and ended. You are greeted by a "Getting Started" dialog, which went systematically, through what the keyboard can do, and how to change it to your own liking. The keyboard has dedicated buttons (along the top) for: My Documents, My Pictures, and My Music. You can change the directories they point to,

which I certainly did. There are buttons for controlling your MP3/multimedia



player, such as Mute, Play/Pause, Stop, Volume Up, Volume Down, Next Track, Previous Track, and Media (which is where you point to your player, such as my choice, Winamp). There's also buttons for Mail (your email program), Web/Home (connect to the Web or home page), and Messenger (Instant Messen-

ger, if you use one). Even the Function keys pull double duty. They can act as normal F1-F12 function keys, or you can toggle the F-Lock key and they become: Help, Undo, Redo, New, Open, Close, Reply (to email), Forward (email), Send (email), Spell, Save (File), Print, corresponding to the function keys F1-F12. Along to the right of these, there are three other buttons: Calculator, Log Off, and Sleep – pretty self-explanatory. Otherwise, the keyboard is a normal keyboard. I have to say that at first I was not sure if I would be using the keyboard's extra functions. I have come to appreciate the one button access to my A/V folders, my music player, and Web and e-mail. When I first saw this functionality come out on some of the commercially available systems on the market, I thought all this one-button stuff was a waste of time, and for lazy people. I must admit that I'm hooked, and I've changed my mind. This is one heck of a keyboard. I've seen it selling for \$20-25 in some places, and this is one piece of hardware you'd get the bang for your buck, and then some! Thanks to Alan Chitlick, and Microsoft's Mindshare Program.

BRIAN LUND is an old hand at computers, having been bit by the bug back in High School, in BOCES (technical school) class. He was supposed to look at Small Engine Repair, but never found the classroom.



Special Interest Groups

SIG NOTES: November 2002

ACCESS. Designs and implements solutions using Microsoft Access database management software.

Contact: Bruce Preston, 203 431-2920 (*bpreston@mags.net*).

Meets on 2nd Tuesday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.

Next meeting: Dec. 10

ADVANCED OPERATING SYSTEMS. Explores and develops OS/2, Linux, and NT operating systems. For meeting notes and notices, follow link to Don's site on *dacs.org*.

Contact: Don Pearson, 914 669-9622 (*pearson@attglobal.net*).

Meets on Wednesday of the week following the General Meeting, 7:30 p.m., at Don Pearson's office, North Salem, NY.

Next meeting: Dec. 11

GRAPHICS. Create/print high-quality graphics and images.

Contact: Ken Graff at 203 775-6667 (*graffic@ntplx.net*). Meets

on last Wednesday, 7p.m., at Best Photo Imaging, Brookfield.

Next Meeting: Jan. TBA

INTERNET PROGRAMMING. Programs for Web site/server.

Contact: Chuck Fizer (*cfizer@snet.net*). Meets on 1st Wednesday,

4-6 p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.

Members' suggestions are welcome.

Next Meeting: Dec. 4

INVESTMENT STRATEGIES. Discusses various investment strategies to maximize profits and limit risk.

Contact: Paul Gehrett, 203 426-8436, (*pgehr4402@aol.com*).

Meets 3rd Thursday, 7:30 p.m., Edmond Town Hall, Newtown.

Next Meeting: Dec. 19

LINUX. Helps in installing and maintaining the Linux operating system. Nov also be of interest to Apple owners using OS X.

Contact: Bill Keane (*bkeane.nai@rcn.com*) 203-438-8032

Meets 3rd Wednesday, 7:30 pm at the DACS Resource Center.

Next Meeting: Dec. 18

SERVER. Explores Back Office server and client applications, including Win NT Servers and MS Outlook.

Contact: Jim Scheef (*jscheef@telemarksys.com*)

Meets 2nd Thursday, 7 p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.

Next meeting: Dec. 12

SMALL BUSINESS. All aspects of small business management.

Contact: Matthew Greger, 203 748-2919, (*matthewg@thebusinesshelper.com*).

Meets on last Wednesday, 1-3 p.m.

Next Meeting: Jan. TBA

VISUAL BASIC. Develops Windows apps with Visual Basic.

Contact: Chuck Fizer, 203 798-9996 (*cfizer@snet.net*) or Jim

Scheef, 860 355-8001 (*JScheef@Telemarksys.com*).

Meets on 1st Wednesday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.

Next Meeting: Dec. 4

VOICE FOR JOANIE. Provides and supports people with Lou Gehrig's disease with special PC computer equipment.

Contact: Shirley Fredlund, 203 770-6203 (*voiceforjoanie@juno.com*).

Next Meeting: Look for announcements.

WALL STREET. Examines Windows stock market software.

Contact: Phil Dilloway, 203 367-1202 (*dilloway@ntplx.net*).

Meets on last Monday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.

Next Meeting: Jan. TBA

SIG News & Other Events

Visual Basic. The VB SIG follows on the heels of the I-SIG with a pizza break in between. The VB SIG also had some new attendees, a few taking VB 6 courses at a local community college. The VB SIG started with random access questions, and new VB6 attendees reintroduced questions about the differences between VB 6 and .Net, so we were off and running again. Both Chuck Fizer and Jim Scheef stress the long term future goal of Microsoft was to move everyone to .Net. As a result, VB 6 will get diminishing support overtime. We then tackled an issue involving the Microsoft msinet.ocx. The msinet.ocx is used in this instance to FTP files to a server over the web. One of the issues was how to determine the amount of data sent so that a progress bar could be updated to relate this information to the user. We looked at the classes in msinet.ocx using the Object Browser, but it wasn't apparent if msinet.ocx provided transfer information. In use, the control is given the recipient URL and the name of the file to FTP. It comes back to the host program when its done, however long that may take. Hence the host program isn't given any sent byte status. Suggestions involved getting a third party control that had a response mechanism, or using a Windows Message Hook to hook Windows call backs to the control and develop your own data flow mechanism. The Deasware Spy Works tool kit provides Windows Hooking components that could be used. We are looking forward to learn how the meter flow function was ultimately resolved.

Server. The random access session never ended this month as we talked about all sorts of things, some of which were actually related to building a server. The December meeting will continue the series on "DNS & BIND" and Samba file sharing until we get it right (I think we're close). I'll show how one bad record can prevent a zone (DNS domain) from loading.

The next meeting will be Thursday December 12th at 7pm in the DACS Resource Center.
See you there!

Internet Programming. The IP SIG had a good turn out with several new attendees in addition to the inveterates. The session started with random access questions about our previous meeting involving SQL Server attributes. We also discussed differences between VB6 and .Net. In fact we spent a lot of time on this topic. We then proceeded on to a demonstration session. One of our members, Claude Provots, recaps the session with the following statements. Claude says: "it will be good drill for me to play back what I was able to grasp from our SIG session yesterday afternoon."

Claude:

"To illustrate Web programming, you review or demonstrate on the fly what programming you need with Visual Studio .NET, using C#, to construct enabling technology for a soccer team management application. A core feature of this application design is to construct functions according to roles in the management scenario for key managers. For example, a team manager will be able to assign players to various positions to flesh out a schedule of games. The notion of roles in this application is based not on Microsoft's Active Directory, nor on Active Server Pages (ASP), but on the role structure as found in SQL Server 2000 for the logins. The logins define users who may log into the system, and links

SIG Notes Continued on page 21

December 2002

Danbury Area Computer Society

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																		
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8	9  7:00 PM BOARD OF DIRECTORS	10  7:00 PM Access Bruce Preston 203 431-2920	11  7:30 PM ADVANCED OS Don Pearson 914 669-9622	12 7:00 PM 7:00 PM SERVER SIG Jim Scheer 860 355 0034	13	14  DACS.DOC SIG NEWS DEADLINE																																																																																																		
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Pastimes

A Brief Introduction to Digital Photography Part II - Store Your Photographs

By Richard P. Ten Dyke

IN THE PREVIOUS section, we discussed three ways to get a photographic image into digital form — film scanning, document scanning and digital camera. Now that we have the image in the computer, how do we save, store, and recover it? We use compression.

When a 35 mm slide is scanned into the computer, it can have an image of 28 megabytes (9.33 megapixels). This is a big file to store on a disk drive or send over the internet. One might conclude that we have 28

megabytes of information, but that is not true. We have 28 megabytes of data and maybe 2 megabytes of information. How can this be?

In 1949, Claude Shannon, together with Warren Weaver, published a book that contained a formula for measuring the quantity of information in a communication. This was the first time that someone viewed information as a measurable quantity. Looking at a Kodachrome slide, one can now measure how much information it contains. With that measurement, one can then determine how much computer memory would be needed to store just that information in digital form.

Theoretically, the amount of information on a slide is infinite, but there is a practical limit. That limit is the amount of information needed to reproduce the slide in a form that will be acceptable to a viewer. Weaver showed that information was dependent upon probability and predictability. Using his theory, the amount of information contained in a pixel is affected by what we know about the pixels that surround it.

Enough theory!

The practical side of this is that in 1986 work was started to establish a

standard method for representing photographic images in digital form. The group was ultimately called the “Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG), under the auspices of the International Organization for Standards (ISO), and the result is known as the “jpeg” standard. Much of the work was done at IBM Research in Yorktown Heights by William Pennebaker and Joan Mitchell. Files that use that standard have the file extension .jpg or .jpeg. The conversion of a 28 megabyte “full” image into a jpeg image is called “compression.”

Jpeg is not the only way to compress a photographic image, but it is the most widely used. The method does not deal with pixels individually, but with square sections of an image that are 8 by 8 pixels, or 64 pixels each. The standard allows for different levels of compression, ranging from very poor quality to very good quality, depending upon settings used by the compression program which, in turn, results from the users’ needs and desires.

How does jpeg work? I have a 600 page book that clearly describes it. You only need to know that the data in the 8 x 8 pixel square is represented by mathematical formulae with constants. If a constant is calculated to be 4.3765344787, for example, it can be “rounded” to 4.377 in one case, 4.38 in another case, and maybe just 4 in still another. As the constants are rounded, the amount of storage required to store the information is reduced, and the file size is reduced accordingly. Of course, 4.38 is not the same as 4.3765344787, so some information is “lost” in the translation. What is important is whether the difference will be noticeable to viewer. Because some information is lost, jpeg is referred to as a “lossy” algorithm.



It is typical for a jpeg file to be one tenth to one twentieth the size of the original uncompressed file. A 28 megabyte file can be compressed into a two megabyte file with little noticeable difference in image quality, and one megabyte with acceptable quality. If compressed to 100 kilobytes you would definitely notice a difference.

We don't need to go into many alternative ways of compressing an image, but some of the more popular ones include “gif”, a format patented by Compuserve, and “stn” (Sting) images created by the Genuine Fractals program. Gif images work best with drawings and images using spot color, like a color cartoon. Still, very decent renderings of photographs are now available through advances made in the gif compression methods. Sting images use another patented approach which claims to be better when small images are to be rendered at a larger size. You will be the judge.

Uncompressed images may have file extensions of .tif or .tiff if they are of the “Tagged Image File Format.” This format allows for some negligible compression. It is a useful format because it is understood by almost any photo editing program. A similar uncompressed format used by Microsoft is .bmp, or simply, bit-map. There may be a hundred different image formats out there, each for a particular purpose, but those that I have mentioned cover most users’ needs.

A digital camera will usually store its images directly in a jpeg compressed format. (Some may offer uncompressed formats as well.) That is why a 5 megapixel image will only take 1 megabyte of storage on your memory card. However, when you bring that image into your computer for editing purposes, it will be “uncompressed” into its original size. The five megapixel image which uses 1 megabyte on your card will become a 15 megabyte file in your computer. I know of no photo editors that can work directly with a compressed image, although I have heard mention of their development from time to time. Their time has passed, anyway, since memory is so cheap that it is easy to get enough memory on a computer to handle almost any situation.

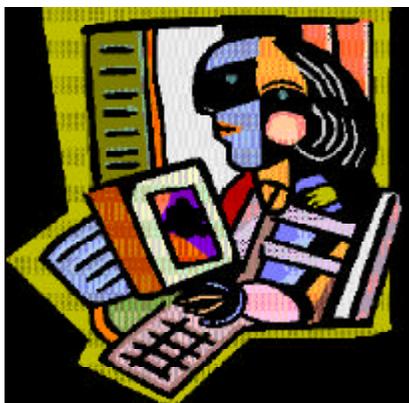
The advantages of image compression are obvious. You can store 600 1-megabyte (5 megapixel) images on a regular CD. You could only store 40 uncompressed images. And the time needed to send an image over the internet makes sending uncompressed images virtually impossible.

The methods for storing, transmitting and retrieving images are the same as for any other kind of file. The risks are the same. Magnetic media, such as floppies, lose their data over time. CD's are a better choice for long term storage, as most computers now come with CD writers. However, there will be new standards. The long term risk is whether, in fifty years, your grandchildren will be able to find a CD reader when they want to look at their baby pictures. Oh well, they probably won't want to look at them anyway. But if they do, you may be better off printing them.

All along, we have been discussing only single "still" images. You are probably guessing by now that the same reasoning applies to motion pictures as well. Of course you are right. There, the standards group is called "Motion Picture Experts Group" and their standard is called mpeg. Makes sense. Interestingly, motion pictures can be compressed further than still images because successive frames of a film are very similar. In addition to visual information, motion pictures also require a soundtrack, hence the same information-theory reasoning applies to the compression of the soundtrack, and is called MP3—which is an acronym created from an acronym, with the number 3 referring to the expected level of sound quality. It all fits together. And MP3 is now flying high in its own right for compressing music. Just as with photos, a 20 to 1 compression ratio is possible here as well.

RICHARD TEN DYKE is a member of Danbury Area Computer Society who has had a long interest in both photography and computers. He started his photography career with a Leica IIIC in 1952, and his computer career working with an ERA 1103 in 1956. He currently is retired from IBM and resides in Bedford, New York. You can reach him at tendyke@bedfordny.com.

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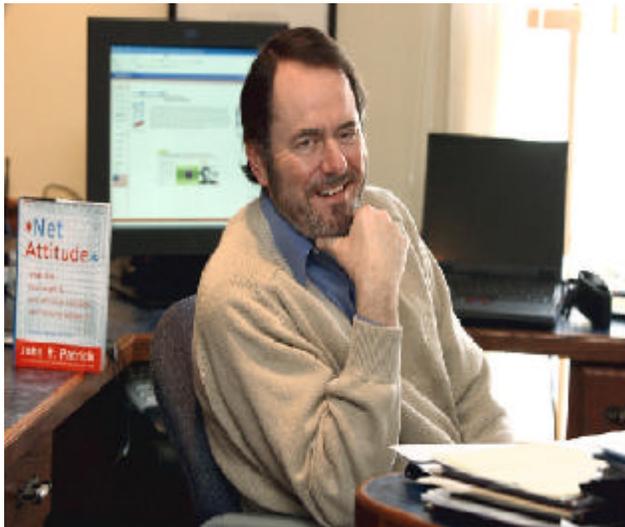


Meeting Preview

John Patrick DACs' Own Patron Saint

By M. Gaberel

ON DECEMBER 3, 2002, DACS members are fortunate to be able to listen again to John Patrick, the



now-retired Vice President of Internet Technology at IBM. The meeting will take place at Danbury Hospital Auditorium starting at 7:00pm, with the main presentation at 8:00pm.

Each December for a number of years, Patrick has enlightened DACS members with the direction and the future the Internet will take. At times he described situations using the Internet that sounded like fiction, but actually were realized a few years later. No wonder John Patrick is called an Internet guru. He is described by the media as a leading Internet technology expert. He travels all over the world giving speeches about the future of the Internet to diverse audiences. DACS members are fortunate to have the opportunity to hear this very charismatic speaker once again at our December 2002 meeting.

One likely topic for presentation will be John's book "Net Attitude", published a year ago and setting forth his philosophy of using the Web to its fullest. You can find out more on the book by visiting <http://netattitude.org/>. If you can find a copy, bring it down for an autograph.

Over the years, John Patrick has described different situations where companies with web sites ask their visitors to call

them during business hours. The question is always, in a global economy, whose business hours? My nine to five in the USA?

Or my sister's nine to five in Switzerland? Or my neighbor's family in Japan nine to five? I'm looking forward to hearing if any progress has been made in that regard.

Another subject I'm curious to find out about is how long the majority of users will still use desktop computers to access the world wide web. Will the trend move toward using cell phones, PC tablets or other mobile devices to get information via the Internet any time soon?

Ed Heere broached the topic during his presentation in August. I hope that Patrick will elaborate on this.

John Patrick's presentations are always very informative, and not to be missed. Look for the link to his site from DACS' web page for more information on what he intends to talk about.

Marlene Gaberel is a DACS board member and VP for Public Relations. You can e-mail her at: marlene_gaberel@yahoo.com.

Do you have special computer skills or a business that uses digital technology in interesting ways? Demonstrate your unique talents and expertise at a General Meeting.

**Become
a DACS
Presenter**

Computer Security

Microsoft Security: an Oxymoron?

By John Heckman

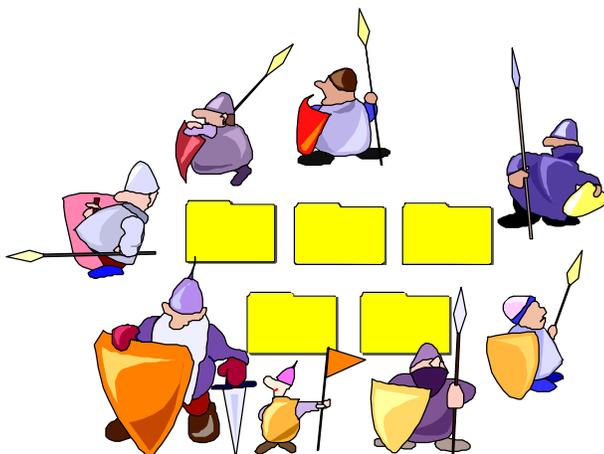
NEW SECURITY breaches in Microsoft products are revealed with distressing regularity. Aside from dealing with the concretes, this also raises more general issues: why is Microsoft unable (or unwilling) to deal with these security issues, and how should a small to medium firm that does not have the resources to devote a part-time employee to security approach this problem? Realistically, to what extent is a small firm actually at risk?

Let us consider the specifics first. The latest security issue is unique in that it does not involve a virus, but an everyday feature of Word, the use of field codes. Word uses field codes for a number of ordinary functions, such as setting the date, or putting the name of a document in a footer so that it is printed with the document. The issue is as follows: someone sends you a document to be edited. You open the document, edit it, print it, and return it to the sender.

Unbeknownst to you, "spy" field codes in the document have inserted documents from your hard drive or server into the document or sent them to a web site. The original sender has "stolen" some of your documents, and there is no way for you to be aware of this. This exploit was first revealed on August 26. To date, Microsoft has refused to recognize the seriousness of this problem, although columnist Woody Leonhard reports that its PR agency has sent an email to one journalist claiming that a "fix" is in the works (not for Word 97, which Microsoft no longer supports, though). More ways to use this particular field code are being published every day and the potential damage it can do is expanding apace. For example, it was originally thought that the sender of the document had to know the exact name of the document he wanted to steal, but that is no longer entirely true.

The easiest "fix" for this problem is to obtain a free utility by Bill Coan, which you can run against any document to see whether it contains a "spy" field. This is available at www.woodyswatch.com/util/

sniff or www.wordsite.com/Hidden File Detector.html. If you are already using Payne Consulting's Metadata Assistant, this supposedly also incorporates a fix for this problem in its latest release.



Will This Actually Happen to You?

This is a widely published exploit that does not require any programming skills other than a moderately sophisticated knowledge of Word. It is not and cannot be picked up by any virus scanners because it is not a virus.

Therefore, any deal or case in which the stakes are high enough poses a risk that someone will try to steal sensitive documents. To some extent the question "how likely is it that this will happen" is irrelevant, since it only takes a single instance for you to lose a big case, be sued for malpractice, etc. Other types of disaster are not very "likely" either, but you still have insurance to protect you. In this case, the "insurance" is free: get the utility and run it against every file sent to you by anyone outside your firm.

Other Security Issues

The risks posed by Word's track changes function have been recognized for several years, and utilities exist to eliminate the danger posed by metadata.

This risk is quite serious and actually happened in at least one instance I am aware of. If you open a Word document that had tracked changes turned on using WordPerfect (or any text editor), you see all the comments and changes.

One firm received a document written in Word, opened it with WordPerfect and noted the following comment concerning one passage: "Jim, do you think we can get away with this language." Needless to say, it was trivial for the attorney who opened the document to say in the course of negotiations, "now, you know I won't let you get away with that language."

Again, utilities exist to minimize this danger, and as a matter of policy, documents should never be sent out of the firm without accepting all tracked changes. If you were really paranoid, you could open every Word document in WordPerfect before you send it out into the world to make sure it is safe.

Internet Explorer

Internet Explorer occupies a special place in the pantheon of security risks because it is so tightly integrated into Windows (can you say "antitrust"?.....). In addition to Microsoft products, other software programs are increasingly requiring that Internet Explorer must be installed, even if you don't use it (e.g., PC Law, Amicus Attorney, Summation, and others). IE security breaches will affect you even if you don't use it.

Therefore it is critical to keep IE updated. Unfortunately, Microsoft's "critical" updates are not always reliable and in some cases can lead to re-opening old security holes. A Microsoft knowledge base article notes that one "fix" is to tell IE not to trust content from Microsoft! This gives you control over what you install. To do this, in IE, click Tools | Internet Options | Content. In the Certificates section click Publishers | Trusted Publishers. If Microsoft is listed, click on it and click Remove. In the future, as Microsoft implements its new license provisions that allow it to change the configuration of your PC without letting you know about it, this will be even more important. You may also want to disable the auto-update "feature" in Windows XP. To do this, go to Control Panel | Administrative Tools | Services and change Auto-Update to manual.

Outlook Issues

The two main ways that viruses spread at the present time are through Internet Explorer and Outlook. Microsoft's response to these issues has been to lock down Outlook through a draconian security patch that seriously inhibits Outlook's ability to integrate with third-party programs such as the PalmPilot. You now have to tell Outlook that you do want to do the link and for a maximum of 10 minutes.

If you are using Outlook with Exchange Server, there is a patch that enables an administrator to disable this warning. If you are using Office XP, you might want to get Ken Slovak's utility that lets you selectively re-enable options that Outlook outlaws en masse. See www.slipstick.com/files/attopt.zip

The standard methods of protecting against virus infection (in addition to an anti-virus program that is updated very often) have been 1) to close the viewer pane in Outlook; 2) never to open an attachment that you are not expecting to receive.

However, with the spread of viruses through IE-related holes, this is no longer sufficient. Even more serious, the newest viruses spread by sending themselves to everyone on your e-mail list. Thus you can receive a virus in what appears to be an e-mail from someone you know.

In response to all these issues, an entire cottage industry has grown up to remedy the security problems with Microsoft products. Two of the best sources are Woody Leonhard's "Woody's Watch" site (www.woodyswatch.com) and his various newsletters, and Sue Mosher's Outlook site, Slipstick, at www.slipstick.com. These are worth checking regularly.

Why Doesn't Microsoft Fix It?

The obvious question is: why can't (or won't) Microsoft fix all these problems? Until recently, Microsoft's main stress was on "ease of use." Since this ease of use was implemented through the same procedures used by virus writers, Microsoft regarded its security holes as features or assets rather than as problems. More recently, Bill Gates announced his goal of providing "trustworthy computing." Aside from whether or not you can take Microsoft pronouncements as good coin, there is a serious structural problem here. To truly eliminate the rampant security breaches, the basic code of Windows and other

Microsoft products will have to be re-written from scratch and will almost certainly be incompatible with all previous versions. This is not only a massive undertaking, but likely to engender the major problem that all previous versions of any software you use will no longer work. In short, implementing "trustworthy computing" impinges on Microsoft's ability to maximize its profits, and is therefore not likely to happen.

What Is Realistic?

It is safe to say that a firm which does not require login-passwords is unlikely to take a serious approach to protecting its documents from intrusion on the grounds that "it's too much work." There is a realistic core to this argument: it is too much work for a small firm in the sense that a serious approach to security would require devoting at least a part-time staff member to it. Yes, you can do this yourself on a haphazard basis, but remember Red Adair's adage: "if you think hiring a professional is expensive, try using an amateur."

Rather than simply ignore the issue, firms might consider hiring a consultant to come in on a regular basis say, a half-day a month and go over all new security issues as they pertain to the

firm. This could also be an occasion to increase user awareness (there is no substitute for on-going security and anti-virus training). In addition, the consultant could be "on retainer" so that you get a priority response in the event of a particularly serious new virus attack, or the actual infection of your system. In short, take the "retainer" approach that is similar to the way attorneys deal with having experts or other attorneys specialized in certain areas "on call" so that you know they will be available when needed.

Five Years of Computer News

This issue marks the fifth anniversary of Computer News for Law Firms. Many of our articles have been syndicated via the Technolawyer network and reprinted in publications reaching hundreds of thousands of readers. Past articles are posted on the Heckman Consulting web site at www.heckmanco.com. Some are outdated, but those on general topics such as why use Case or Document Management programs still read well.

John Heckman is president of Heckman Consulting, specializing in software integration for law firms, and is a frequent contributor to dacs.doc. You can reach John at heckman@heckmanco.com

Let DACS Promote your Business

DACS is offering members free space to advertise their small businesses in the business card section of the colored insert in dacs.doc. This offer is being made subject to space available, and cards will be rotated each month to guarantee equal access.

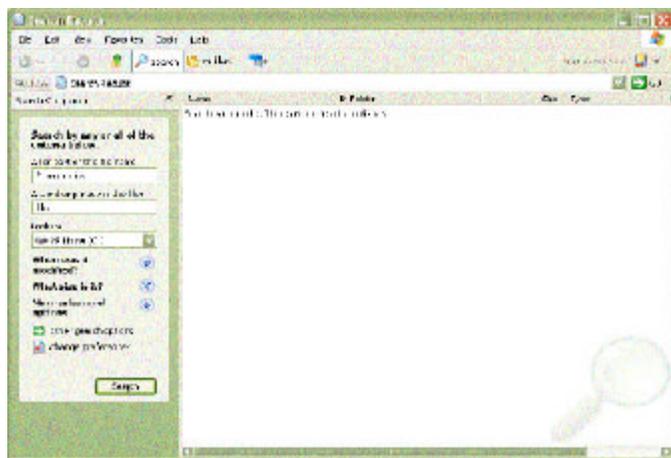
Please send your cards to DACS at 4 Gregory Street, Danbury, CT 06810-4430, give to any board member, or e-mail graphic image to dacseditor@dacs.org.

Sorry, but postal regulations require that ads be computer related, and specifically forbid ads for Credit, Insurance or Travel Services.

Windows XP Search Is Broken!

by Richard Corzo

I'VE BEEN USING Windows XP, both Home and Professional versions, for some time now and have generally been impressed with its stability and speed, and have liked the user interface



improvements. But recently I encountered a problem that really caught me by surprise. There are certain things that you just take for granted in Windows or any other operating system.

The problem I encountered was with the Windows search function. As you're probably familiar with, you can specify some text to search for within a set of files whose names match a specified pattern. For example, if you want to look for all the .log files that contain the text "error message", you can specify "*.log" on the first line of the Search panel and "error message" on the second line. You can also specify a drive letter or folder to start the search in. In my case I was doing a search of .properties files for a particular text string. Notice the figure showing the Windows XP search dialog where I have specified "*.properties" for the file name pattern, and "file" for the text string to search for. According to the Windows XP search results, there are no matches on my C: drive. However, I know for a fact that there are .properties files with the text string "file" in them. So why is Windows lying to me?

It turns out that this is a known problem with Windows XP. Look up Microsoft Knowledge Base article 309173 at [support.microsoft.com/default](http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;309173)

support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;309173 and you'll see a description of the problem. It explains that Windows XP only searches specific file types. It doesn't search all files "to enhance the performance of searching and to avoid extraneous results." That's great, but what if the "extraneous results" are exactly what I'm trying to find. The article explains that I can install "Windows XP Application Compatibility Update, October 25, 2001" to add a few more file types, install a program with a registered search filter for the file type I'm interested in, or

edit the Windows registry to search an additional file type. Well there's no program I'm familiar with that will allow me to search .properties files with Windows, so I tried editing the Windows registry. I found that didn't work for me. I still couldn't search .properties files.

I was starting to get mad, so I did a search of the Web and the newsgroups to see what solutions others might have found. One user mentioned a free utility called Agent Ransack (www.agentransack.com). My problem with Windows XP turned out to have a silver lining, because I found that Agent Ransack was much better than the Windows XP search function!

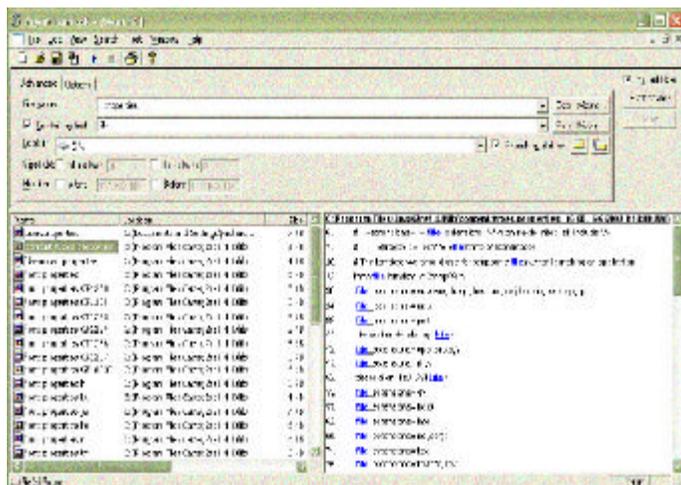
As you can see from the second figure, Agent Ransack had no problem finding the .properties files containing the text string "file". As a bonus it also displays in the right pane the lines in a file that contain the specified text string, when you select that file in the

search results pane on the left. When I first tried this on the .properties files, everything seemed to be on line 1 of each file. This is because .properties files don't use the Windows convention of ending lines with both a carriage return (CR) and line feed (LF) character. Not to worry because Agent Ransack can be configured to also look for the Unix and/or Mac conventions for ending a line. Go to the Search menu item, select Configuration... from the drop down menu, and check the desired check box. The figure shows the results on separate lines after I checked the Unix (LF) check box.

Another welcome feature that I always wondered why Windows didn't have is the ability to save search results to a file. Doesn't that seem pretty obvious if you want share the results with, say, a customer support rep? Agent Ransack also supports "regular expressions" for specifying searches. If you're a search guru, you may already be familiar with the special syntax of regular expressions. If not you can read about them in Help, and there's also an Expr. Wizard button to create an expression by answering a few questions on what you want to search for.

I first discovered the problem with search before Windows XP Service Pack 1 became available. Now there's another solution available if you install the service pack and turn on the "Index files with unknown extensions" option that you can get to through a complicated sequence described in Method 2 of the above-mentioned Microsoft Knowledgebase article. Even so you may want to give Agent Ransack a try.

RICHARD CORZO is a computer programmer currently working for Apelon, Inc. in Ridgefield, CT. He has contributed past articles on PC operating systems and utilities.



Mobile Computing

DACS Goes to the Tablet PC Launch

By Jim Scheef

THREE DACS MEMBERS traveled down to Broadway to see Bill Gates introduce the new Tablet PC. Bruce Preston, Mike Kaltschnee and I attended the launch event as user group repre-



Bruce and I at the breakfast, still showing the effects of the early train ride.

sentatives. Since this was my first “launch event” I can’t compare it to other events. In terms of scale, it was certainly not like the super big event that launched Windows 95 but I thought it was fun and informative with the emphasis on fun.

The day started with the 5:30am train from Danbury. Yes, this was a very early start. Bruce joined me when the train stopped in South Norwalk. Once in New York, we made our way to the Westin Hotel for a breakfast hosted by Microsoft for the user group representatives. We met several people who had won Acer Tablet PCs plus free trips to the launch event in two contests run by Microsoft Mindshare. In all I think seven or eight people won free Acer Tablet PCs in these contests or raffles held that day. Unfortunately none of us were among the winners.

Following the breakfast we walked to another hotel where all of the Tablet PC manufacturers and several software companies had demonstration booths. We could poke, prod, and best of all write on Tablet PCs from Fujitsu, HP/Compaq, Acer, ViewSonic, Toshiba and

a couple of the Asian manufacturers that make many brands of notebooks. This was interesting as many of the manufacturer representatives were quite knowledgeable about the products and

why things are the way they are. For instance, everyone but HP/Compaq uses the same digitizer in the screen for pen input, so the stylus pens are interchangeable between all Tablet PCs except HP/Compaq. If you by an HP machine, don’t lose the stylus! The HP is a “pure tablet” with an attachable keyboard which then makes the machine into a convertible tablet like the Acer. The convertible format has an attached keyboard that swivels so the machine can close like a conventional notebook or

can fold with the screen exposed for pen input. The Fujitsu, Toshiba and ViewSonic machines are strictly tablets with no clip-on keyboard, however all offer innovative docking stations.

Naturally the operating system for all of the machines is Windows XP Tablet PC Edition. The OS gives these machines many features beyond just writing on the screen. All of the machines can switch the screen orientation from landscape, like a normal monitor to portrait mode which makes it more like writing on a paper tablet. Several machines do this switch automatically when you simply rotate the tablet in your hand. The docking function goes a couple of steps beyond what we have seen in current notebooks in that these machines are better able to remember and adjust their configuration. For instance, when docked they can automatically set the tablet screen to be a second monitor. This is a pretty neat

idea. Since the screen will be visible anyway, you might as well use it. The suggested application is to keep your calendar open on the tablet screen while your work using the larger monitor screen. Naturally they always assume an unlimited budget!

After playing with the machines and drinking more coffee to shake off the effects getting up at 4:30 to catch the train, we walked across the street to the theater for the actual launch event. Seating for the user group representatives was on the main floor—the best seats in the house! Bruce, Mike and I sat in the center of the fifth row. Eventually Bill Gates came out to tell us why the Tablet PC is the “next big thing.” The presentation started with a history lesson on past failures. At one point, Bill Gates held a Radio Shack Model 100 and said that it was the last project at Microsoft where he wrote the majority of the code. The celebrity of the event was Rob Lowe of “The West Wing” on NBC. There is also a woman writer I had never heard of who said that she liked to read electronic books in bed on her Tablet PC because the screen is illuminated and “it doesn’t disturb her husband.”

I’m working on a means to make these opportunities more available to the DACS membership. There was very little lead time from the time we first got word of the event to when registration was closed so there was no way to open this up to more people. I’m hoping we can find a way to both communicate and coordinate these opportunities in the future so more people can attend.

JIM SCHEEF is president of DACS



Bill Gates holds a Tablet PC.

Random Access

November 2002

Bruce Preston, Moderator

MEMBERS WHO ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND THE GENERAL MEETING may submit questions to "askdacs@dacs.org" by the day prior to the meeting. We will attempt to get an answer for you. Please provide enough detail, as we will not be able to ask for additional information.

Q. My web browsers (IE or Netscape) refuse to play the sounds associated with video clips. When I use a different computer, they play fine. What might it be?

A. It sounds like (excuse the pun) one of the audio codecs has not been installed properly—perhaps it was damaged during an attempt to perform a Windows Update. We suggest that you re-install Windows Media Player, or Real Player One.

Q. My Norton Firewall flashes a warning that says "Backdoor/Sub Seven is attempting to access your computer..." Is this a legitimate request by a software company attempting to update their software, or should I block it.

A. Backdoor/Sub Seven is a trojan program that is trying to break into a compromised machine, which it will then take control of. Once in, it could do most anything—most often it is used as a zombie for a Distributed Denial of Service attacks (DDOS attack) on some site. Block it!

Q. When I run Windows 98 disk defrag, it runs OK on drive D, but stops at 1% of drive C. How can I get it to run to completion?

A. You might try Executive Software's Disk Keeper. Or you might try running in Safe Mode, as you won't have other applications (including anti-virus) running that might be playing with your hard disk. Be sure that you have run a Scan Disk prior to running Defrag. You could also bring up Task Manager (Ctrl-Alt-Del) you will get a list of applications running—you really only need Explorer and SysTray.

Q. I have a new PC with a flat panel display. The manual with the display says "Don't touch it." Of course, somebody touched it. What can I use to clean it?

A. The display may have a coating on it—you don't want to disturb it. I would suggest that you use a minimal amount of eyeglass cleaner on a soft cloth. Camera lens cleaner would also be safe to use. Do not use stronger cleaners, such as Windex or other cleaners with ammonia. Do not spray directly onto the panel—you don't want it to get so wet that it runs down the face of the device.

Q. Could someone compare SNET DSL versus Comcast Cable?

A. In general, DSL will be consistent in speed. Cable has the potential to be faster, but because it is shared bandwidth it can slow down as the number of users changes. When you get DSL, you can get the connection from SNET, but you do not need to use SNET as your ISP service. For example, MAGS.NET here in Danbury supports DSL as an ISP—the circuit is maintained by SNET, but MAGS.NET provides the connection. My next door neighbor has a 'pure' SNET connection and has experienced multiple extended

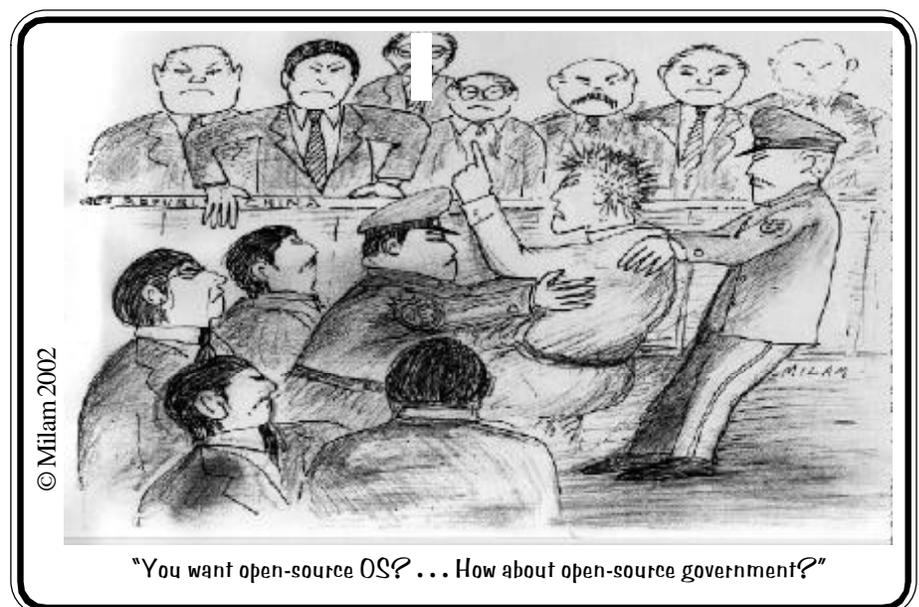
outages. I have not. Other comments: Some providers require that you load an additional protocol—PPPoE (Point to Point Protocol over Ethernet). It is unclear as to why they require this—it is just another layer that might break. The DSL/Cable Modem Router/Firewalls that are now available support PPPoE, so if you connect your broadband circuit to a home network, you do not need to install PPPoE on each machine. During the meeting there was then a discussion as to 'always on'—some reported that with one or the other service this was not the case. It may be a function of whether you are supplied with a static IP address or not. Some vendors do not want to provide you with a static IP address as that would enable you to have a web server (or other service) visible to others on the internet.

Q. When I start up Windows Explorer, or try to use most any program that uses the FILE OPEN dialog, I often get a hang. How do I fix it?

A. In the Start Menu find the System File Checker—Start /Programs/Accessories/System/System File Checker—it will check to make sure that all of the system DLL (Dynamic Link Library) are proper. We suspect that you have a damaged DLL.

Q. What are the differences between Windows XP Home and Windows XP Pro?

A. The major differences have to do with



support for features that would be used in a business environment. The first is that Windows XP Pro will make a connection to a DOMAIN (a set of computers and servers managed by a centralized "Domain" server—which consolidates the control of logons, permissions, etc.) Windows XPHome will still network in a peer-to-peer environment. The second major difference is the support of centralized management, where an administrator can force updates or software installs onto a machine from a server. The third major difference is that user 'profiles' can follow the user from one machine to another. This includes the availability of installed programs that one user may be authorized to use, and another not. XP Pro can run server software, such as IIS. It also supports remote access. None of these are likely to be needed by a home user. There is no difference in performance.

Q. I am going to donate a machine to a charity. How do I 'sanitize' the hard disk?

A. You might look at Disk Wipe from PGP. It is freeware for Windows. Visit <http://web.mit.edu/network/WhatsNewWin.html>

Q. Does anyone have a DOS driver for an HP inkjet printer? I have an old DOS-only program I need to run once in a while, and I need to print.

A. Many of the early inkjet printers had native support for the early HP LaserJet printers. You might be able to tell your DOS application that you have an HP LaserJet (or LJ-II) and be able to do basic printing.

Q. How can I get information on hooking up a Web Cam such that I can have a 'video phone'?

A. Software comes bundled with many of the cameras. In addition, there are components in Net Meeting, Yahoo that work with a click. You also might look for [ivisit](http://www.ivisit.com/) at www.ivisit.com/

Q. I have two machines that are running Windows 98SE. They can see each other and exchange data. The second machine has dual

boot, supporting Windows XP Pro. When I have Windows XP Pro running, I can 'see' the other computer's icon but I can't do anything with it.

A. First, make sure that you have the machines set up to share independent of the user's logon name—it is probable that the logon name(s) don't match in some way. Another possibility is that you have the internal firewall in Windows XP running.

BRUCE PRESTON is president of West Mountain Systems, a consultancy in Ridgefield, CT specializing in database applications. A DACS director, Bruce also leads the Access SIG. Members may send tech queries to Bruce at askdacs@dacs.org.

Voice for Joanie

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(1-866) 770-6203
and become a
Voice for Joanie
volunteer.

SIG Notes, continued from page 8

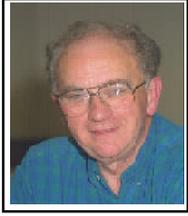
them to particular databases and a set of permissions granted for actions with respect to the assigned database. The most comprehensive role is that of system administrator that allows any action available in the system. "The human interface for the application for soccer management is a screen or panel with a segment on the left to present options to the user who will select a function desired. On the basis of this selection, the banner at the top will change to reflect what is chosen, and the center section of the panel will offer the set of actions available to the role implicit in the function chosen."

Claude continues: "A paradigm shift with C# is that there are no functions, but only assemblies, like a .DLL file, that reflect the properties and methods associated with an object. It is an imperative for the developer to understand very fully, at a deep level, the notion of an object. Even a variable is an object in this programming paradigm. Some of the features of Visual Basic 6.0 are still evident in the design mode of the IDE. There is a hierarchy of controls in a kind of toolkit, and these controls can be dragged and dropped on to the design sheet that will be a form when the application is run. It is important to be very careful in the running of the design because the automatically generated code can not be changed with impunity. When the developer is asked whether it is desired to stop debugging, an answer "Yes" will shut off all debugging capability for the whole IDE. Understanding an object requires understanding Microsoft Foundation Classes (MFC) and the .NET Framework. The workings of the Common Runtime Language (CRL) is also important. The CRL plays a key role in a paradigm in which there are no .EXE files but only assemblies, a kind of interpreted P-code, as a result of the programmer's efforts to compose an operable program. Basic programming structures, such as if-then or if-then-else are still present, as are boundaries of modules, such as sub-endsub, and function-endfunction, but the nature of a compilation is different in ways that are not obvious to a casual observer. Thanks Claude. We ended the session our hopes for the next session containing some real pages connected to the SQL Server database."

Small Business. The SB SIG WILL NOT be meeting for the months of November and December, 2002. The SIG will restart on January 29, 2002. We are desperately looking for one of our members to conduct one of the SIG meetings. If you're interested, please contact Nancy Greger at Nancyg@thebusinesshelper.com. We wish you all the a safe and joyous holiday!

MATTHEW & NANCY GREGER

Candidates



Charlie Bovaird — Danbury (**Incumbent**) — is a consultant and retired IBMer. A long time DACS member, a board member for over 8 years and serves as treasurer. He brings to DACS over 40 years of experience with hardware and software. He prepares the monthly *dacs.doc* mailings and has chaired DACS' participation at the PC EXPO. He developed the membership survey, and along with Jim Ragsdale maintains the membership database. He also coordinates the activities of the education committee, scheduling and assigning classes.



Marlène Gaberel — (**Incumbent**) — In recent years, Marlène has spread the word about DACS by sending press releases to the local and not so local media. Marlène has been a resident of Sandy Hook since 1982. During the day she works as an International Relations for a Bethel-based manufacturing firm. At home, Marlène shares her computer with sons Joshua, a 9th grader in Newtown High School, and Zachary, a 5th grade at Sandy Hook school. Both kids are game enthusiasts and Marlene plays technical adviser when the games do not perform to the kids' expectation.



John Gallichotte — Danbury— As a long time computer enthusiast John purchased his own mini-computer in 1970. Once bitten by the computer bug, he started building computers. He completed his first microcomputer in 1973 as part of his master degree program in computer science. He was an early member of The Danbury Computer Society, a forerunner of DACS. With DACS, he was the group leader of the first networking SIG and has supported the DOS and hardware support help line since its inception. Having retired, he now designs/builds/plays with autonomous robots and teaches computer programming to the elderly two days a week.



Bill Keane — Ridgefield. Retired in 1991 after thirty years in the telecommunications industry where he was introduced to computers in 1984, first to the MSDOS and then the Unix operating systems. After retirement he found the Linux and Open Source community and adopted the philosophy. After joining DACS in 1994, he became involved in the Alternative OS SIG, and then the beginning Linux group (LUG) which was started at the beginning of this year. Bill's goals are to help introduce Linux and Open Source to the area and help members get started with their installations and provide a demonstration of an installation and applications at the Resource Center.



Frank Powers — North Salem, NY. Frank has been involved with computers since 1973 when he prepared punch cards for runs through the IBM 410 system, and the PC has always been a tool of both work and pleasure. Most recently, he worked for Voyetra Turtle Beach, Inc., a local computer audio/software company, and in 1998, while working for VTB, he did his first DACS music software presentation. His experience led him to wire his house for home networking, and begin storing and organizing his music collection on his PC for distribution throughout his house. He also runs an Internet Radio Station, Frank's Americana, on Live365.com, which broadcasts American-based music to the world 24/7, and can be accessed at www.franksamericana.com. As a board member, Frank would use his experience in helping to preserve DACS as a valuable community resource.



Roger Straub — Brookfield. As a member of the Danbury Area User Group (DAUG) Roger was one of the founding members of DACS, and would like to see the organization continue to grow and serve the interests of the community. In 1996 Roger retired from Kraft Foods (previously merged with General Foods) as an Applications Consultant responsible for developing, installing, maintaining and supporting Supply Chain systems. Following early retirement Roger has continued his involvement with computers as a contract consultant. Roger's interest in computers started in college with a Fortran Programming course and computer lab which used digital and analog computers to solve industrial control problems and has progressed through Mini, Main Frame, PC's (DOS, Windows, networking, Linux), Work Stations (UNIX,, Client Server) and intranet and internet applications.

Roger has lived in Brookfield with his wife for over 25 years.

Ballot

1. Select five (5) of the candidates for director of the Corporation, as indicated by my check mark:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charlie Bovaird | <input type="checkbox"/> Bill Keane |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marlene Gaberel | <input type="checkbox"/> Frank Powers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John Gallichotte | <input type="checkbox"/> Roger Straub |

2. Such other business as may properly come before the meeting

Yes

No

I appoint Larry Buoy, Secretary as my agent to vote in my place and stead at the annual meeting of members on December 3, 2002 as follows:

Signed _____

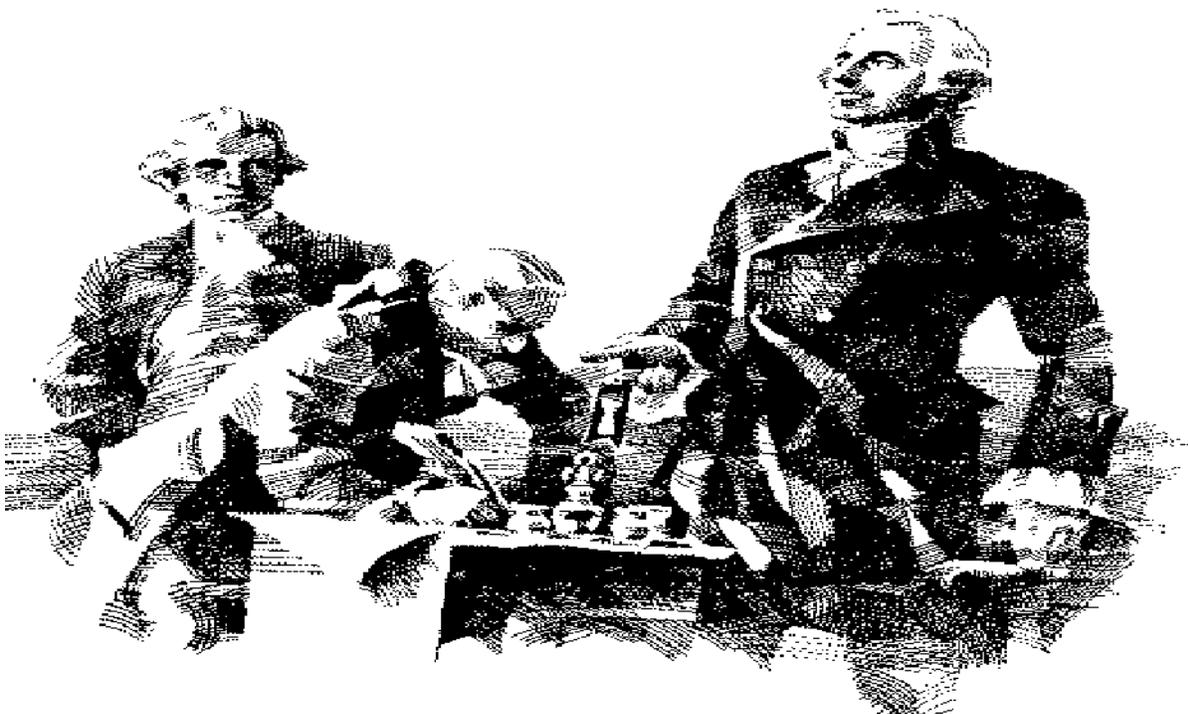
Dated _____

Notice of Annual Meeting Notice is given that the Annual meeting of members of DACS will be held on Wednesday, December 3, 2002 at 7:30 p.m. in the Danbury Hospital Auditorium, 24 Hospital Avenue, Danbury, Connecticut.

An election of five (5) directors will be held. The meeting is further called for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the membership.

In the event that a member will not be able to attend, a written proxy may be delivered to the Secretary or to any other officer or director of DACS so that it arrives on or before the Annual Meeting.

Larry Buoy, Secretary



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*For more info, eMail Matthew Greger at
matthewg@thebusinesshelper.com*

Future Events

December 3 • John Patrick - Future of the Internet
January 7 • Frank Powers - Digital Audio

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